

Exhibit 1

Monterey Election Day, Tuesday, May 10

Candidates' Forum

Select Board and Tree Warden

On Saturday, April 16, two dozen or so Monterey residents assembled to hear the views of the two candidates hoping to fill a vacancy in the Monterey Select Board following Scott Janssen's retirement.

In her opening statement, Carol Edelman mentioned that she was born and raised in New York, living in San Francisco and Washington DC, and finally landed in Monterey thirty-five years ago to start a family and eventually open a successful restaurant in Great Barrington. She believes Monterey to be a "fine community" and said that when she moved here she "knew she was home." Over the years she has helped found the Monterey Land Trust; in her words "envisioned and built" the playground with all volunteer help; and worked with the library, all the while serving as a public school teacher in Lenox. She's now retired and works with therapy dogs and is a tour guide at the Botanical Gardens in Stockbridge.

Mrs. Edelman went on to list some of the key issues as she saw them, which included the importance of communications technology in Monterey, meaning specifically broadband, a still-evolving situation in the town. She talked about the importance of optimizing education, a process that she said is currently at a standstill. She has also been attending



Michael Johnson and Carol Edelman at this year's candidates' forum.

board meetings for some time and feels it is important to do everything possible to keep Monterey's low tax rate, to do more with less, improve communication in the town government, and finally strive to make Monterey "a kinder, gentler place." She finished by mentioning the "old Monterey" that she can still remember, and how important it is to preserve the older atmosphere and small town values.

Michael Johnson (known to many as Sergeant Johnson of the Monterey police force) opened by speaking to the importance of keeping the democratic process open to the people. He sketched his employment history, mentioned having lived in Franklin County, MA, for

fourteen years, and that he has lived in every county in Massachusetts except Dukes County (Martha's Vineyard) and Nantucket County. He served four years in Navy submarines and stressed the sharpening of his conflict resolution skills in that environment, where the farthest you can get from another person is three hundred feet.

He highlighted his awareness of the tight-knit nature of the Monterey community, pointing out the special nature of the large second-home community here and its beneficial influence on the town budget. He mentioned the complex nature of town issues and the budget, but also expressed appreciation for the work of the select board and the state in governing.

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After their opening statements, the candidates were asked two questions, which they had received several days beforehand. Moderators Liz Goodman and Stephen Moore took turns asking the questions.

Experience

The town's budget, approximately \$3.7 million, involves a complex combination of several different types of funds, which have very specific applications and restrictions. In addition, each department makes detailed funding requests for the coming year. There are also many players in forming the budget, including mostly elected and some appointed persons, and it is also impacted by the regional school district budget. What experiences have you had that you feel prepare you to effectively manage this complex and critical town process?

Mrs. Edelman talked about her experience in private business and the managing of every aspect of her restaurant. In her life as a teacher she did some grant writing, and managed budgets. Her home management, she felt, had a profound impact on her feelings about budgeting, and she is a strong advocate for living within one's means and, above all, not borrowing. She has been attending select board meetings since February, admires the job the finance committee does, and if elected intends to follow her own dictum, "Pay attention and do the work."

Mr. Johnson told the crowd, again, that "people run the town," not the members of the select board, who are merely like "department heads." He talked about capital management plans that need to take into account the fact that things wear out and need to be replaced, and that despite \$200 million of state roads-and-bridges money, New Marlborough still has five closed bridges. Monterey is lucky, he feels, to have relatively little infrastructure, and it is within the realm of possibility that things may continue to be maintained with the help of the select board and the state.

Town Governance, Part One

At the February special town meeting, there were articles asking the town to make three town offices (clerk, treasurer, and tax collector) appointed rather than elected. The town, as represented by approximately seventy voters, chose to keep these offices elected. What are your thoughts as to whether all, or individual, offices should continue to be elected, or should be changed to appointed?

Mr. Johnson pointed out that the town had voted on this issue and made its decision at the recent special election. He is not in favor of town hall appointments because they give power to the select board and remove it from the people, as well as add to the select board workload.

Mrs. Edelman agreed with Mr. Johnson. She said that the "will of the people" was clearly on the side of keeping elected

positions but pointed out that if only one person is running for a position, then they are in fact not technically elected, but self-appointed. Despite the paradox this poses, overall she stands by the town's decision.

Town Governance, Part Two

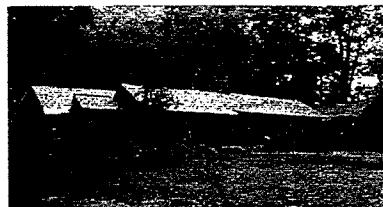
The question of hiring a part-time town administrator is still in front of the voters. The current board debated including a budget line item for salary money for a half-time town administrator. Do you feel that the town needs an administrator?

Mrs. Edelman was aware of other nearby towns hiring administrators and felt that, most of all, care needed to be taken to thoroughly delineate the position. If the town ultimately decided not to hire an administrator, she felt that the town would be capable of finding its way without one.

Mr. Johnson explained that in the last town meeting the vote was in favor of hiring an administrator. He said that the town needs a professional in the town hall, and mentioned advertising the position in state publications for people familiar with municipal law and finance.



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The next set of questions were sent to the candidates beforehand. A brochure including all the questions as well as the candidates' statements, was available to the audience to follow along.

Lake Garfield Tax District

At a special town meeting in February, voters authorized, but did not require, the select board to forward to the state legislature an act creating a special tax district around Lake Garfield for the purpose of generating funds from lakeside property owners to manage "the health" of the lake. The board has yet to take action, and it may fall to the new board to decide on what action to take. As a potential member of a new select board would you favor sending the act on to the legislature?

Mr. Johnson mentioned that the issue was debated at the latest special town meeting. He clarified that the homeowners owned the lakefront, but that the lake itself was technically a federal resource. The Lake Garfield district, if it were formed, would not take ownership of the lake, but merely maintain it in good health. He said that the vote taken at that meeting was simply to authorize the select board to "decide what to do."

Mrs. Edelman expressed a "discomfort" with the idea of a special class of taxpayer, with the introduction of a "money talks" kind of dynamic in the town, and worried that even those with good intentions could affect the town as a whole. She thought it was important to look into the legalities of such a move. When questioned by an audience member as to the exact nature of her "trepidation" with the special category of taxation, she again talked about the possibility of the people who paid more exercising disproportionate influence and power.

Workload

The select board, as the town's managers, spend a considerable amount of time individually, informally estimated as fifteen or more hours per week outside of their warned open meetings, in discussions with select board members from other towns, in school district meetings, and investigat-

ing problems, solutions, etc. regarding a broad variety of town issues. Typically each board member holds the "brief" for certain issues (for example, currently Steve Weisz leads on broadband, Kenn Basler on roads and bridges). Will you be able to devote the substantial time, and on which areas of town affairs would you be most qualified to lead?

Mrs. Edelman expressed her good fortune in being retired and experiencing the "semi-empty nest" syndrome, and said that she has more than enough time. She said that, drawing from her years as a teacher, she would be particularly interested in working on school issues.

Mr. Johnson warned that his answer was going to "stir the pot a little," and felt that in recent months and years the issues in front of the board went beyond the select board member's duties. Further, he thought that the town needed specific commissions, such as a roads commission, and another to resolve what he called the "MBI turmoil" around the advance of fiber optics and broadband in town. He told the audience that he worked an eight-hour shift but was otherwise available.

Town Financing

The current select board, with support of the finance committee, is proposing a large increase in the annual contribution to the stabilization fund, and creating a second stabilization fund for highway uses. Doing this will impact the town tax rate. Should the town be collecting tax monies now to support capital expenses that might be years away?

Mr. Johnson stressed the importance of towns planning ahead for future expenses and developments. For example, he said that the state was even now asking towns to plan for the eventuality of driverless cars, which reminded him of the historical scenario in which, even with the onset of horseless carriages many years ago, nothing was ever done and the streets became "muddy ruts." He spoke to the issue of Route 23 having been surveyed seven separate times for repairs but that no one in all those studies looked at drainage.

Mrs. Edelman brought up the low tax rate in Monterey, which had helped her with her own home "stabilization fund," and in general liked the relatively low-ambition level of the town governance, but also liked the idea of such a fund, and felt that incremental tax increase to support one would be a prudent move.

The Community Center

The Friends of the Wilson-McLaughlin Community Center have filed a citizens petition asking the town to raise \$40,000 to support the last phase of work on this municipal property, which would lead to the center finally opening for public use and programming. If you are asked at town meeting whether or not you support their petition, what would you say?

Mrs. Edelman said that she's been a contributor and supporter since the beginning, and pointed out the eventual benefits to the town. She also noted that townspeople tended to wonder, "When will it end?" Ideally, she hoped for someone with the resources to do so would step forward to finish it.



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Mr. Johnson's reply was that if the town approves of this particular line item, so be it, it is the people's decision.

School

The school issue is a delicate, and for some, very emotional issue for our town. Just about every town wants to have its own school, but many towns don't have the population to support their own schools, and so larger, regional districts are formed. Financing and managing regional districts is complex, and requires a great deal of political cooperation. What are your thoughts about how Monterey should support our students?

Mr. Johnson felt that the town had an obligation to support students but also had a contract and a budget to sustain school children throughout the entire district, in and of itself a highly debated issue. Above all, children's needs had to be met.

Mrs. Edelman said that the school board problems were large ones. She was shocked to see the financial disarray in the budget presented at a recent select board meeting, where the school committee presented several versions of the overall anticipated bottom line, describing the versions as "What It Is," "What It Should Be," and "What It Might Be," —scenarios that depended on what might happen in another district town. She mentioned the enormous disparity between, as she put it, what the ideal scenario would be had they gotten the assessments right, and the current reality. She mentioned that a well-paid business manager left recently only to be replaced by one getting paid even more, and, finally, that she'd "never seen

anything like it." She felt it was the select board's responsibility to veto this budget as it stands. In short, the school situation was "a mess top to bottom."

Audience Questions

Barbara Swann pointed out that other towns had established special tax districts for Lake Buel, and that those towns had "not fallen apart." She then mentioned a "prudential committee" to determine various district identities. Mrs. Edelman conceded that she was not currently well informed enough to comment, and needed to look into it further.

In a response to a question concerning the prospect of a town vote to override Proposition 2 ½, Mrs. Edelman characterized increasing expenditures and taxes as a "rising tide" and wondered if it were possible to permanently resist such a tide. In her opinion, it will in time be necessary to spend more money, and that despite Monterey not having any "excess of services," it was important to keep up the standard of life here, and to also appreciate the very low tax rate the town currently enjoys.

The select board is asking the town to vote on a \$500,000 Proposition 2 ½ override, partly to support a more realistic stabilization fund. Mr. Johnson was asked his opinion on this. He responded that the sixty-eight-page Proposition 2 ½ booklet was like trying to "operate a VCR remote," and that the town needed to be grateful for its excellent finance committee, and, further, that a stabilization fund was necessary in the event of any number of possible natural disasters. He personally would support an override, but in the end the people would decide.

Michael Germain once again brought up the issue of the Lake Garfield special tax district, and after discussing minutiae of this act, asked: one, did they support the special tax district, and, two, did the issue demand a revote given that the printed material given the voters at the meeting misrepresented the structure of the lake prudential committee?

Mr. Johnson said that he hadn't read the act but that the prudential committee was only authorized to operate in a way similar to a homeowners' association. He reiterated that all the town meeting vote did was to authorize the state legislature to vote on the issue, and that ultimately the people will decide it.

Mrs. Edelman saw no harm in a second vote, and that it was a question she would ask our town counsel to look into.

Mary Makuc asked the candidates if they would be open to having school-age students come in and participate in school related discussions. Both candidates welcomed the idea.

Steven Weisz asked if, given that being on the board was an ongoing learning experience, would Mr. Johnson complete his term on the board if he were offered another job elsewhere. Mr. Johnson said that he "hadn't gone anywhere yet," despite having received financially advantageous offers in other police departments.

Other Offices

Kevin Fitzpatrick, a candidate for tree warden, was the only other candidate for town office present. Fitzpatrick, a member of the town's highway department, holds a degree in horticulture, and is also a member of the fire department. He sees dead trees all over town posing potential hazards, and believes that "more needs to be done with less." The question put to him was, as tree warden, how would he manage his town job with also being the tree warden? Mr. Fitzpatrick responded that it was a balance of after-work hours and outsider help, as the tree warden has a budget to work with. An audience member clarified that the warden could not hire himself to do contract work.

—Dave Irland

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